



Society for Immunotherapy of Cancer

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Luminaries in Cancer Immunotherapy to Support Research Opportunities for Early Career Scientists in Chicago Rock Concert

CHICAGO – The CheckPoints, the house band of the Society for Immunotherapy of Cancer (SITC) featuring nine leading cancer researchers, will take the stage on June 3 at Buddy Guy’s Legends to benefit the future of the cancer immunotherapy field.

[The Forward Fund Presents: The CheckPoints Rockin’ for a Cure Fundraiser](#), scheduled for June 3 at Buddy Guy’s Legends in Chicago (700 S. Wabash Ave.), is the sixth-annual fundraiser of the *Forward Fund*. Established in 2012, SITC’s *Forward Fund* provides grants to, and financially supports programs for, early career scientists to stimulate the future of the field through education and research. This will be the first year the fundraiser takes place at Buddy Guy’s Legends.

The CheckPoints feature numerous luminaries from the cancer immunotherapy field, including famed researcher James P. Allison, PhD, Chair of the Department of Immunology at MD Anderson Cancer Center (Houston, Texas).

“There has never been a more exciting time to be a cancer researcher due to the continuous progress being made in immunotherapy,” said Dr. Allison, who plays harmonica in the band. “The *Forward Fund* plays an important role in helping to strengthen the future of our field by supporting meaningful research initiatives and educational programs. Through The CheckPoints, my colleagues and I are glad to bring awareness to SITC and the *Forward Fund*.”

More than \$1 million in SITC Fellowships have been awarded to young investigators through the *Forward Fund* since 2014. [The Forward Fund](#), through donations, also supports the [SITC Sparkathon](#), a society-led program in its second year that brings together 30 young investigators to work toward solving critical hurdles in the cancer immunotherapy field. The application period for the 2018 SITC Sparkathon class is underway.

“SITC has long prioritized the need for more opportunities for early career scientists that provide unique and valuable experiences in the field to hone their craft,” said SITC President Lisa H. Butterfield, PhD. “Through its support of society programs such as the SITC Fellowship Awards, SITC Young Investigator Awards and the SITC Sparkathon, the *Forward Fund* ensures a bright future for the field that is full of skilled researchers.”

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Other members of The CheckPoints include:

- Thomas F. Gajewski, MD, PhD, Professor, Immunology and Cancer Program Leader at the University of Chicago (lead guitar);
- Rachel W. Humphrey, MD, Chief Medical Officer of CytomX Therapeutics (lead vocals);
- Patrick Hwu, MD, Head, Division of Cancer Medicine at the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center (keyboard);
- Jason J. Luke, MD, FACP, Assistant Professor of Medicine at the University of Chicago (trumpet);
- Ferran Prat, PhD, Senior Vice President, Research Administration and Industry Relations at the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center (saxophone);
- Brad Reinfeld, student at the Vanderbilt University School of Medicine (bass guitar);
- Dirk Spitzer, PhD, Assistant Professor of Surgery at Washington University (drums); and
- John M. Timmerman, MD, Professor of Medicine at the University of California, Los Angeles (guitar).

VIP tickets to The CheckPoints: Rockin' for a Cure are now available. Call 414-271-2456 to skip the line and secure your spot for the show. Doors open for the concert at 8 p.m. with the band scheduled to take the stage at 9 p.m. General admission tickets are available at the door. A minimum donation of \$30 is suggested in support of the *Forward Fund*. This event is sponsored by CytomX Therapeutics, Inc. and NanoString Technologies, Inc.

For more information about this event, [visit SITC CONNECT](http://www.sitcconnect.org), the society's official website. To view past performances of The CheckPoints, visit the [SITC YouTube Channel](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC...).

About SITC

Established in 1984, the Society for Immunotherapy of Cancer (SITC) is a non-profit organization of medical professionals dedicated to improving cancer patient outcomes by advancing the development, science and application of cancer immunotherapy and tumor immunology. SITC is comprised of influential basic and translational scientists, practitioners, health care professionals, government leaders and industry professionals around the globe. Through educational initiatives that foster scientific exchange and collaboration among leaders in the field, SITC aims to one day make the word "cure" a reality for cancer patients everywhere. Learn more about SITC, our educational offerings and other resources at sitcancer.org and follow us on [Twitter](https://twitter.com/sitcancer), [LinkedIn](https://www.linkedin.com/company/sitcancer), [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/sitcancer) and [YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC...).

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